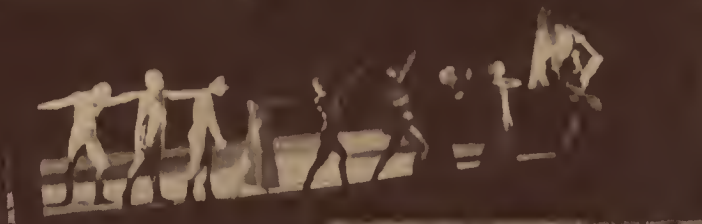
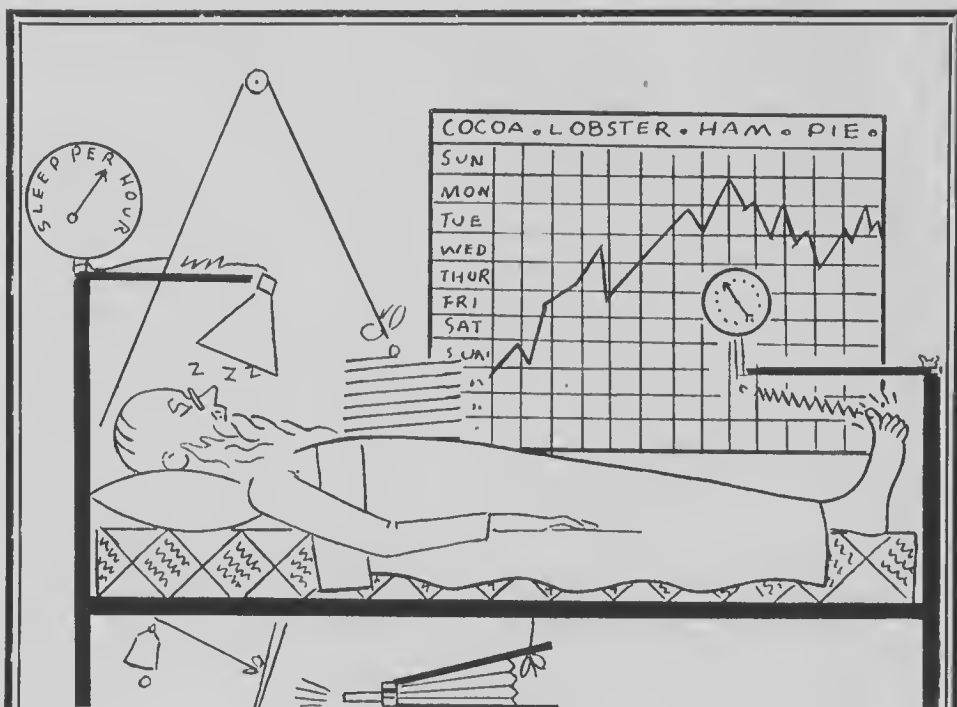


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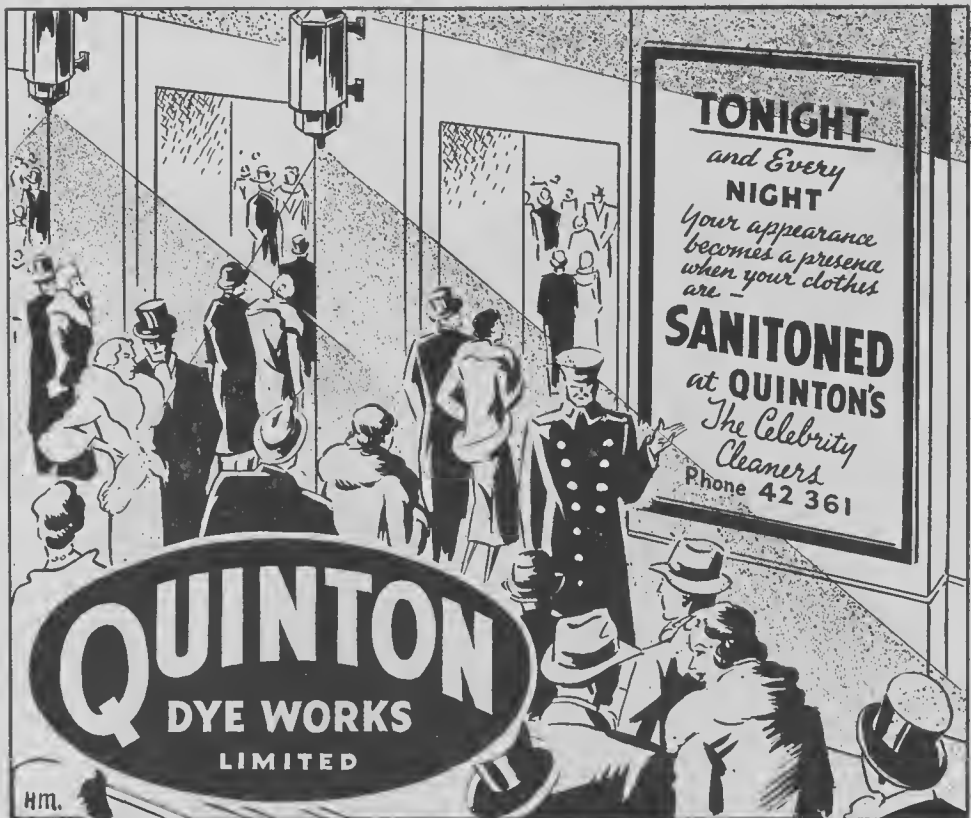
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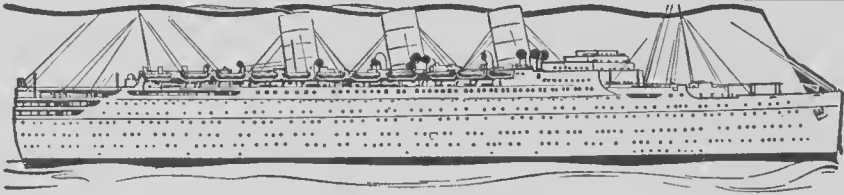
Fritz Kreisler

FRITZ KREISLER is a living refutation of the theory that child prodigies rarely fulfill their promise in maturity. Kreisler was himself a wonder-child. His interest in the violin began almost with speech. He appeared in concert in Vienna at the age of seven and entered the Vienna Conservatory the same year, though an exception had to be made in his case as the entrance age was fourteen. Three years later, he carried off the gold medal for violin playing, and having learned, in a manner of speaking, all that Vienna could teach him, went to Paris.

At the Paris Conservatory, Massart the celebrated violin pedagogue, and Delibes, who taught theory, raised their eyebrows somewhat at the inclusion of the "petit Viennois," then ten years old, into their classes. But when, two years later, young Fritz won the Premier Grand Prix de Rome against forty competitors, all of whom were twenty years old or more, there was general recognition of the presence of a towering talent in their midst.

From Paris, Kreisler returned to Vienna and undertook his first tour. This was with the famous pianist, Moriz Rosenthal and was routed through the United States. The American tour was successful; but at its close Kreisler did an astounding thing, a thing which marks him forever from the usual run of successful child prodigies and gives the real key both to his character and genius. He gave up violin-playing completely, announcing his ambition to become a physician like his father. He studied intensively for this, studies that were interrupted by a period of military service during which he became an officer in a regiment of Uhlans.

Not once during his stay in the army did Kreisler touch the violin. Presently, the urge reasserted itself. He began playing and made several appearances. But he was not satisfied. He felt he had lost something and retired into the country to work for eight weeks—as only a Kreisler can work. In March, 1899, he made his return debut in Berlin, and the reception was brilliant. From then on his greatness was assured and recognized. The same year, he returned to this country, and was everywhere acclaimed. Since then his fame has grown until he is the towering figure in the violin world. There is not a city of any importance in the world, where this great artist has not been heard, again and again.



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PROGRAMME



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I

(a) DEVIL'S TRILLTartini

Tartini, Guiseppe, Celebrated Violinist; born Pirano, Istria, Italy, on April 8th, 1692; died Padua, February 16, 1770. While studying at his parent's desire, for the priesthood, his first lessons on the violin strengthened his ardent longings for a secular career; his father finally allowed him to study law at Padua (1710), but music, especially the violin, and fencing, were his passion. A charge of abduction, following on his secret marriage to a niece of Cardinal Cornaro's, obliged him to take refuge in the Franciscan monastery at Assisi; for two years he studied the violin, also composition (under the organist Padre Boemo), and then returned to Padua, a reconciliation having been effected with the Cardinal. Shortly afterwards he heard the violinist Veracini at Venice, and was stimulated to more arduous endeavor; sending his wife to relations at Pirano, he retired to Ancona for further study of the violin. About this time (1714) he discovered the combination-tones, and used them in perfecting purity of intonation. His fame now increasing, in 1721 he was appointed solo violinist and conductor of the orchestra at St. Antonio in Padua. He spent the years 1723-5 in Prague as chamber-musician to Count Kinsky, having been invited thither to assist at the coronation of Karl VI; he then resumed his duties at Padua, and in 1728 founded a violin school there. Tartini was one of the great masters of the violin; his style of bowing still serves as a model and his compositions are regarded as classics.

(Continued on Page Ten)



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PROGRAMME—Continued

(b) CHACONNEBach

(FOR VIOLIN ALONE)

II

CONCERTO, A-MINOR, NO. 22.....Viotti

Allegro moderato

Adagio

Finale

(Continued on Page Eleven)



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PROGRAMME — Continued

Viotti, Giovanni Battista, eminent violinist and composer, was born at Fontaneto da Po, Vercelli, Italy, on May 23, 1753. He died in London, March 3, 1824. His father, a blacksmith, gave him a violin, which he learned to play without tuition and attracted the attention of the Bishop of Strambino, who recommended him to the Prince della Cisterna; the latter confided him to the teaching of Pugnani at Turin. Viotti soon entered the court orchestra; in 1780 he made a grand tour of Germany, Poland and Russia with Pugnani, and was feted at the court of Catherine II. Repairing to London in 1782, he won signal triumphs; later, at Paris, he played repeatedly at the Concerts Spirituels, where his art was acknowledged as unrivalled. It happened that in 1783, one of his concerts was poorly attended, while in the next concert, a

(Continued on Page Thirteen)

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PROGRAMME—Continued

mediocre violinist won great applause from a large audience; this so irritated Viotti that he abruptly closed his public appearances, and devoted himself to teaching and composing, at the same time acting as accompanist to Queen Marie Antoinette, and 'maitre de chapelle' to the Prince de Soubise. Failing in his attempt to gain the directorship of the Opera in 1787, he joined Leonard, the Queen's hairdresser, in establishing an Italian opera, opened at the Tuileries in 1789, transferred to the Theatre de la Foire St. Germain in 1790, and to the newly erected Theatre Feydeau, where the revolution ruined the enterprise. Viotti, obliged to recommence his career as a virtuoso, went to London, and gave a series of most successful concerts; but a rumour gained credence that he was an emissary of the revolutionists, and he thought it advisable to leave England, retiring to Hamburg until 1794, when he resumed concert-giving in London; was manager of the Italian Opera in the ensuing winter, and director of the Opera Concerts in 1795.

Ill success caused him to embark in the wine-trade. On a visit to Paris in 1802, he was persuaded to play before Cherubini, and others and, to their astonishment, outrivalled his earlier performances. He finally settled in Paris as Director of the Opera from 1819-22, when he resigned with a pension of 6,000 francs; he died while on a pleasure-trip.

On account of his influence as a player and teacher, (especially through his two pupils Rode and Baillot), and the breadth and dignity of his works, Viotti has been styled 'the father of modern violin-playing.' His compositions, more particularly of the maturer period, show great refinement and skill in workmanship, and are classics of violin-literature; he was the first to write violin-concertos in the broad modern sonata-form, and displaying the full resources of the orchestra. He published 29 violin-concertos, of which No. 22, played to-night by Mr. Kreisler, is the most popular.

INTERMISSION

(Continued on Page Fifteen)

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PROGRAMME—Continued

III

(a) ROMANCE, F-MAJOR.....*Beethoven*

(b) RONDO, G-MAJOR*Mozart*

(c) LA FILLE AUX CHEVEUX DE LIN.....*Debussy-Hartmann*

(The Maiden With The Flaxen Hair)

(Continued on Page Sixteen)

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PROGRAMME — Continued

(d) HYMN TO THE SUN *Rimsky-Korsakoff*

(e) SPANISH DANCE *De Falla-Kreisler*

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For recitals in smaller halls, Kreisler uses the Stradivarius—a small, beautifully delicate instrument with the fine silvery tone characteristic of the best Stradivarii.

This particular “Strad” was stolen in Spain during the Napoleonic war by an English sailor who sold it to the keeper of a public-house in England. The saloon-keeper played it for a time and eventually sold it to a musician. It has changed hands several times since.

The Gagliano is the work of one of the earliest Florentine violin-makers and Kreisler alternates it frequently with the Stradivarius. The Guarnerius violins he uses for recitals in large halls and for appearances with orchestra. Both of them have the rich golden tone so distinctly identified with the masterpieces of the great Joseph, superlative craftsman of the Guarnerius family and nephew of the man who founded the house. One of these violins formerly belonged to Wilhemj and is dated 1737. The other, made in 1742, was long held at a fabulous figure by the house of Hill of London, and Kreisler realized the fulfillment of a life-long desire in finally acquiring it. It is recognized as one of the finest examples of the maker's art.

Asked for his favorites among fiddles, the violinist answered:

“The ones I love best are those made by Guarnerius and Stradivarius. But if anyone asks me which I love better of the two, I can only say—just as it's hard for a man to tell whether he prefers brunettes or blondes, or vice versa, even so I cannot say which I prefer. In the matter of violins I am and always will be polygamous.”

But no matter how great his love for them is, Kreisler insists upon spending at least four or five months a year away from his violins. “I never play in the summer,” he says. “Between May and October, I just rest. It does me a lot of good, too, I think, though I don't know that I ought to prescribe it for other violinists. They might probably lose a certain amount of skill and power. What surprises me in myself is that I return to my violins in the fall with the same joy and vigor with which I left them.”

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